

07/17/2018

The Honorable Mimi Walters
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Walters,

The members of the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) commends your introduction of innovative legislation, H.R. 4219, the Workflex in the 21st Century Act. RILA is supportive of the bill and encourages all members of Congress to cosponsor.

By way of background, RILA is the trade association of the world's largest and most innovative retail companies. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad. RILA and its members strongly support providing their workforce benefits that allow individuals to care for their family while working in the retail industry.

It is important to note that many RILA members already provide robust paid leave benefits -- both for sick and family leave. And often these benefits apply to all workers from part-time hourly store associates to full time professionals working at headquarters. Moreover, since the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, RILA members have offered new leave benefits or expanded existing programs. In addition, a recent internal RILA survey revealed that our members believe paid leave is now an imperative and will look at implement more leave because of high demand from job seekers. The retail industry is moving in the direction of more leave because in a time of fierce competition for talent and record low unemployment, retailers know that available resources must be invested to provide in demand workforce benefits.

However, the growing compliance and legal costs associated with the patchwork of state and local paid sick leave requirements are becoming a major headache for multistate retailers. This type of regulatory framework hampers, rather than helps retailers provide desired leave benefits to their employees across the country. Unfortunately, more resources are diverted to compliance rather than being invested in innovative benefits for workers.

For this reason, RILA strongly supports H.R. 4219 which seeks to provide a sensible and uniform pathway for employers to voluntarily offer a sick leave policy for all employees. For those employers, like many of our RILA members who already offer robust leave benefits, this legislation is a win for them and their employees. We strongly urge all members of the House of Representatives to support this commonsense and groundbreaking legislation.

Best,



Evan Armstrong
Vice President, Government Affairs
Retail Industry Leaders Association